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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides a brief description of secondary education in Liechtenstein. The publication is part of a series that seeks to make the public aware of the education systems and traditions in all signatory states to the European Cultural Convention and to outline the essential problems these systems presently are facing. This short booklet contains four sections. Part 1, "General Section," contains: (1) "Social, Historical and Political Background"; and (2) "The Structure of the Educational System." Part 2, "Issues Section," includes: (1) "The Process of Policy-making and Innovation"; (2) "Financing and Budgeting"; (3) "School and Society"; (4) "Administration and Organisation of the Educational System and Schools"; (5) "The School as an Organisation and as a Community"; (6) "The Curriculum"; (7) "Pupil Assessment"; (8) "School Staff: Teachers, Head Teachers, Other Staff"; and (9) "The European Dimension." Part 3 focuses on the "Efficiency and Performance of Secondary Education." Part 4 examines "Challenges, Problems, and Prospects." (EH)

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Education

Secondary education in Liechtenstein

Council of Europe Press

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Secondary education in Liechtenstein

by Franz Messner

Guide to secondary education in Europe
Editor Denis Kallen

A secondary education for Europe
Council for Cultural Co-operation

Council of Europe Press, 1995

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The **Council of Europe** was founded in 1949 to achieve greater unity between European parliamentary democracies. It is the oldest of the European political institutions and has thirty-four member states,[1] including the fifteen members of the European Union. It is the widest intergovernmental and interparliamentary grouping in Europe, and has its headquarters in the French city of Strasbourg.

Only questions related to national defence are excluded from the Council of Europe's work, and the Organisation has activities in the following areas: democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; media and communication; social and economic affairs; education, culture, heritage and sport; youth, health, environment and regional planning; local democracy; and legal co-operation.

The **European Cultural Convention** was opened for signature in 1954. This international treaty is open to European countries that are not members of the Council of Europe, and it enables them to take part in the Organisation's programmes on education, culture, sport and youth. So far, forty-three states have acceded to the Eurupean Cultural Convention: the Council of Europe's full member states plus Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Holy See, Moldova, Monaco, Russia and Ukraine.

The **Council for Cultural Co-operation** (the CDCC) is responsible for the Council of Europe's work on education and culture. Four specialised committees – the Education Committee, the Standing Conference on University Problems, the Culture Committee and the Cultural Heritage Committee – help the CDCC to carry out its tasks under the European Cultural Convention. There is also a close working relationship between the CDCC and the regular conferences of specialised European ministers responsible for education, culture and cultural heritage.

The CDCC's programmes are an integral part of the Council of Europe's work, and, like the programmes in other sectors, they contribute to the Organisation's three overarching policy objectives for the 1990s:

– the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy;

– the promotion of an awareness of European identity;

1 Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

– the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

The CDCC's education programme covers school, higher and adult education, as well as educational research. At present, its main priorities are projects on: the European dimension of secondary education; university co-operation; adult education and social change; modern languages; and the pooling of the results of educational research.

In 1991, the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe launched a project entitled "A secondary education for Europe". The aims of the project are to:

– give young people the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to meet the major challenges of European society;

– prepare young people for higher education, and for mobility, work and daily life in a multilingual and multicultural, democratic Europe;

– make young people aware of their common cultural heritage and their shared responsibilities as Europeans.

This project has two elements: the first devoted to reflections and consultations between the member states on the overall policies and strategies, and the second on the European dimension in the school curriculum.

The series entitled "Guide to secondary education in Europe" sets out to present in a synthetic form – country by country – the major elements of secondary education structures and policies that exist in CDCC member states.

Each guide has been written, on the basis of a common analysis, by experts designated by the authorities in each country concerned.

Denis Kallen has undertaken the difficult task of the general co-ordination of this series, guaranteeing its coherence and thus allowing comparisons to be made among countries.

Given that this is a field in which developments sometimes take place very quickly and are of an almost permanent nature, it is possible that, despite the considerable efforts made to take into account the latest reforms in the pipeline, certain changes may have taken place since the manuscript was originally received.

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I. General section

1. Social, historical and political background

The small state of Liechtenstein, covering a national territory of around 160 square kilometres and having a population of 29 000, has belonged to the community of nations for 150 years as a sovereign state. Its form of government is a constitutional, hereditary monarchy, based on democratic and parliamentary principles. This particular form of government, the particular features of the state of Liechtenstein, has had an effect on the educational system in a variety of ways.

The various reigning princes have supported the Liechtenstein educational system by financial contributions, providing for many school buildings to be constructed, for scholarships and other educational requirements. The encouragement of education by the present Reigning Dynasty has been reflected in the provision of funds to finance the current *Neues Lernen* (new learning) project.

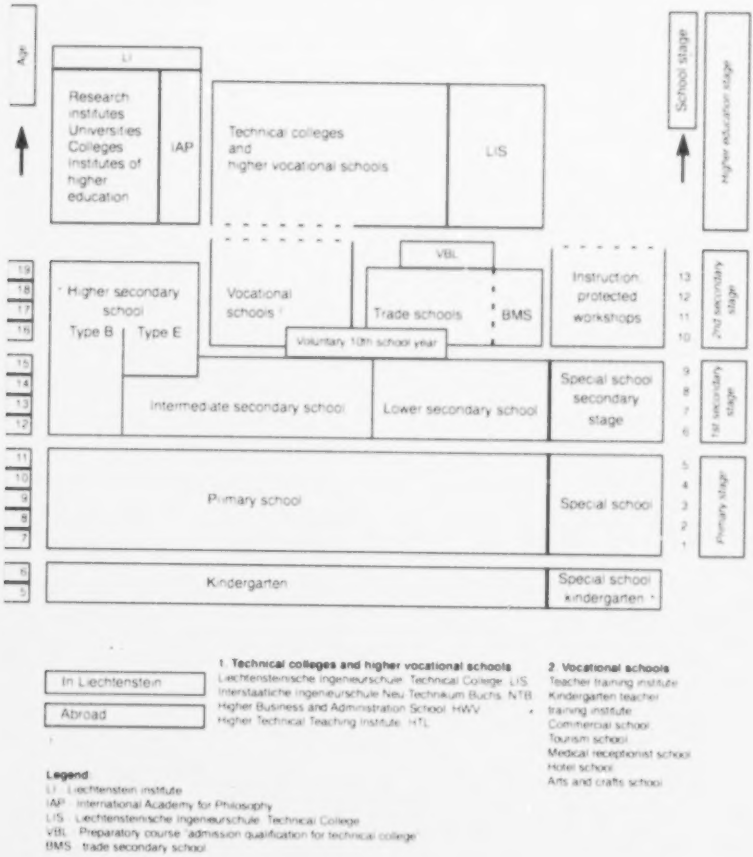
It is not possible for the state to provide a complete school and educational system within its own borders. It does, however, offer generous financial assistance to support private schools and other organisations within and outside the country.

The state authorities of Liechtenstein started turning their attention to matters of schooling in the eighteenth century. The first statutory stipulations appeared in the form of a decree issued by the Princely Court Chancellery on 18 September 1805. This included basic provisions for the establishment of a Liechtenstein educational system, such as compulsory schooling, the building of schools, the appointment and dismissal of teachers, the duration of the academic year and so on. Under Prince Johann I, the first statutory stipulations to be designated as school legislation came into force on 5 October 1827. The abolition of school fees was included in these.

The first really comprehensive education act in Liechtenstein was introduced at the beginning of the reign of Prince Johann II on 8 February 1859. This was characterised by the consolidation of the schools administration authori-

ties at national and local government levels, the extension of compulsory schooling to eight years and the widening of the curriculum for the primary schools.

Structure of Liechtenstein education system



In 1929, Prince Franz I signed a fundamental education act which created a statutory basis for areas not embraced by previous legislation such as kindergartens, secondary schools, private schools and so on.

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The education act still largely in force was passed by the *Landtag* on 15 December 1971. The innovations contained in this legislation provide for a restructuring of the school system including: the introduction of two new state-supported types of school (the lower secondary school and the remedial school; the remedial school was integrated into the lower secondary school in 1990); the creation of a short-term higher secondary school (of five years' duration); the extension of compulsory schooling to nine full years; and the reorganisation of the national school authorities. Furthermore, it provided for the establishment of an educational psychology service and a schools medical officer. This education act deals with the entire schooling system of the Principality of Liechtenstein in an all-embracing manner. The general principles of this act are defined in detail by directives. In the spring of 1992, a specific "act concerning technical colleges, academic colleges and research institutes" was prepared for the higher education area of the Principality. This legislation came into force on 25 November 1992.

2. The structure of the educational system

The general structure of the Liechtenstein school and educational system is characterised by the teaching traditions and school systems of the German-speaking countries. As a result of political and economic factors, the two neighbouring countries of the Principality, Switzerland and Austria, exercise the more immediate influence on Liechtenstein. For this reason, the types of school and the terminology of the Liechtenstein school system are in principle the same as in other German-speaking countries. Differences exist only in details of organisation and, above all, in the development of the school system.

Because of the small size of the country, only a limited number of types of school can be offered in Liechtenstein. State schools in Liechtenstein are of the following types: kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools (lower secondary school, intermediate secondary school, higher secondary school) and special schools. Alongside the state schools, there is also a private school (Waldorf school). To enable pupils to attend other schools elsewhere, agreements have been negotiated with various educational establishments outside Liechtenstein to ensure the availability of places.

The accompanying diagram shows the current structure of the school system in the Principality of Liechtenstein. All children who have attained six years of age by 30 April in any one year are required to attend compulsory schooling in the following school year.

Before commencing compulsory schooling, however, children may attend a two-year kindergarten course if desired by the parents.

After completing primary school (five years), pupils move to the lower secondary school, the intermediate secondary school or the higher secondary school, as determined by a selective advancement procedure. The intermediate and the lower secondary schools offer a four-year course, and the higher secondary school a course lasting five or eight academic years. The final examination of the higher secondary school enables pupils to go on to higher education. In addition to these school types, there is also a special school for children requiring remedial assistance. Backward, disturbed or handicapped children receive instruction in the special school with appropriate tuition and therapeutic aids.

In 1992/93, there will be fifty-one kindergarten classes. In addition to the fourteen primary schools established in the local communities, there are three lower secondary schools, five intermediate secondary schools and one higher secondary school. A total of 4 480 pupils (including kindergartens) will receive instruction from 282 permanent teaching staff and 125 temporary, or semi-permanent, teachers.

The government is responsible for the supervision of the entire educational system. At the same time, it promotes educational planning, ensures the application of the laws by the bodies subordinated to it and oversees the management activities of the Educational Council, the Schools Council and the Community School Council. Individual transactions are handled by the school administration bodies listed below. When initiatives in educational policy are taken by individual persons or groups outside the competent bodies, these are usually passed on to the government via the School Board or in some cases also directly.

The Education Council is appointed by the government for a period of four years and consists of a member of the government, as the chairman, and eight other members. The tasks of the Education Council include: the counselling of the government in all questions of principle concerning the educational system; the updating of decrees to take account of developments in the school sector; and the establishing of priorities for the development of the educational system as a whole.

The School Council is likewise appointed by the government. The period of office coincides with that of the Education Council. The competence of the School Council includes, among other things: the right of proposal for the appointment of head teachers at schools sponsored by the state; the deciding of appeals; the transfer of pupils to another type of school; the permis-

sion for school admission before the scheduled date; exemption from compulsory education; the specification of obligatory advanced education courses and so on.

The Community School Council is elected by the Community Council for a period of office of four years and consists of a representative of the Community Council, a representative of the teaching staff, a representative of the local clergy and a kindergarten teacher. The Community School Council is responsible for the direct management and supervision of the local school system, which includes the kindergartens and primary schools. It specifies the school districts for these two areas, elects and appoints kindergarten teachers and has the right to propose teachers for primary school appointments.

In addition, the Community School Council advises the Community Council on educational questions and examines draft proposals concerning important and fundamental changes in the educational area if these affect the interests of the local community. Its major tasks include the preparation of a community draft budget for the education system for submission to the Community Council and the supervision of the school buildings and facilities belonging to the community.

The government has currently appointed a commission to work out a new structural model for the secondary grade I.

II. Issues section

1. The process of policy-making and innovation

In 1970, the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein published a report on education, including the most important objectives for educational policy in the 1970s. This study was intended as a white paper prior to the passing of the new school act which came into force on 15 December 1971.

The future requirements of the educational system were laid down in a paper under twenty-five different headings.

The objectives included:

– the raising of the matriculation pass rate to 10%; in 1992/93, the matriculation rate was already running at 20%;

– an increase in the period of compulsory education to nine school years; this was introduced at the beginning of the 1980/81 academic year;

– the introduction of a remedial school in which backward children were to receive instruction; such children have in the meantime been integrated either into the primary school or in the lower secondary school;

– the extension of school buildings; many new school buildings have been erected in recent years;

– the furtherance of more trainee teachers; the staff requirement for teaching positions has now been largely met.

The remedial school mentioned above, which in its final form was to serve about 5% of the pupil intake for one year, existed as a separate type of school until 1990. The separation of the pupils with learning problems was increasingly felt to be discriminatory so that fewer and fewer pupils were sent to the remedial school. Due to this development, it was eventually no longer possible to organise any classes. This is why all pupils (with the exception of handicapped children for whom a special school with remedial assistance is provided) are now integrated into the primary school or lower secondary school.

For the needs of these children, special measures of various kinds have been taken in the schools. These include supplementary instruction, supportive lessons, remedial therapy for congenital alexia and a disturbed calculative ability, and instruction in small classes in the lower secondary school.

The principal concept formulated for the Liechtenstein school system (in: *Schule wohin?* (Whither the school?), second edition 1987, Liechtenstein Schools Council) places full emphasis on the all round development of the pupil. This basic educational approach has had momentous consequences in the shaping of syllabuses and instruction, for the assessment of pupils and for teacher-pupil interaction. It has led to a series of school trials, which are at present being tried out in the form of school projects.

At the primary school stage, experience is being gained with pupil assessment without the traditional marks at two project schools from the first to the fifth class. In a school trial at the secondary stage I, "new learning" is being carried out in which use is mainly made of the "suggestopedia" method of instruction and of the "learning with self-checking" instruction model. In the "small classes in the lower secondary school" trial, different variants of small classes are being tested.

2. Financing and budgeting

The financing of the state educational system is effected largely by central government and to a lesser extent by the community authorities (50% of staff costs of the primary schools), which are able to exercise independent financial competence within the framework of community autonomy. The community authorities are responsible for the primary schools and the preschool stage, but the state provides grants for teachers' salaries and participates in the funds invested in equipment and buildings.

The state schools of the secondary grade (the higher secondary school, the intermediate secondary schools and the lower secondary schools) are financed entirely by central government, whereby such financing not only includes current expenditure (administration, salaries, educational materials, payments to pupils, etc.), but also funds for buildings and equipment. In a calendar year, the public funds employed for the payment of all teachers amount to about 40 135 000 Swiss francs. The funds allocated to the educational sector account for about 16,5% of the total national budget.

In order that Liechtenstein pupils can have access to a complete range of vocational training and higher education, the state has concluded agreements with numerous sponsors of foreign educational establishments, primarily in Switzerland. These agreements ensure that sufficient places are avail-

able and regulate their financing. In some cases, Liechtenstein is also involved in the financial support of foreign educational establishments. When Liechtenstein students attend such schools, the state meets the cost of tuition.

Private schools and/or private tuition must always be privately financed. Various local communities, however, provide voluntary subsidies within the scope of their community autonomy. Tuition at the country's state schools is always free. School material is subsidised by the state and is therefore available at greatly reduced prices or at no charge at all. When school lunches are provided at state schools, these are offered at a low price as the state meets most of the cost of such meals. Should functions and events be held outside of the school grounds, such as camps, school trips, excursions and the like, a sum of money is allocated for each pupil so that the contribution by the parents is very much reduced. School bus services are organised by the state and are free of charge.

3. School and society

Great importance is attached in Liechtenstein to equipping children for their subsequent working life. Within the scope of job guidance, pupils of the secondary grade I – lower secondary school – (school years six to nine) are gradually introduced to working life. With systematic personality development on the one hand and real-life contacts with trade and industry (visits to enterprises, probationary workdays, etc.), career advisers and the career information centre help pupils to choose a career. It is at the lower secondary school level that pupils are given most guidance in deciding what work they wish to take up.

Most young people complete an apprenticeship usually lasting three to four years. About 900 apprentices work for three to four days in the week for their employer and then attend an appropriate trade school for one to two days each week. This dual system follows on from the ninth school year, the ninth to the twelfth/thirteenth school years comprising a trade-school training. Pupils who do not follow such a course usually go on to a commercial school, a training course for doctors' receptionists, a teachers' training college, institutes of higher education and suchlike.

Representatives of trade and industry and officials of the governmental Occupational Training Authority and the Schools Council meet together in an Occupational Training Council at regular intervals to discuss matters connected with occupational training. This body has essentially an advisory function. Within the scope of additional teacher training schemes, teaching staff of the secondary school grade I can follow practical occupational courses in trade and industry to acquire first-hand knowledge of the working world.

The schools collaborate closely with the building regulation authorities in the planning of new school buildings. Representatives of the teaching staff and also officials of the Schools Council serve on the Building Authority Commission and express their views and requirements concerning the construction and equipment of school buildings. In the area of development aid, schools collaborate with the Liechtenstein Development Aid Agency (LED). Schools also actively participate in waste disposal campaigns, campaigns against Aids, drugs, smoking and alcohol or to promote traffic safety. At the same time, such problem areas also figure in the subject of daily life studies. New ways are also being sought in schools to equip pupils to deal with the drug menace.

Parent groups have been formed in many schools. These are usually organised as associations and since 1993 are represented by a national body. Educational legislation on the structure and organisation of the different types of schools specifies what tasks can be handed over to such groups. They are invited to discussions of various school questions, such as changes in educational legislation, the abolition of school attendance on Saturdays, school holiday arrangements, and so on. In addition, they concern themselves with a variety of school matters such as homework or safety on the way to school. Parent groups get together with the teachers at their respective schools for the joint discussion and analysis of school problems.

4. Administration and organisation of the educational system and schools

The hierarchy of the Liechtenstein school system was broadly described in the second section of the first part of this paper. The various aspects are now examined in detail.

Primary school

The primary school is the basic educational establishment for the upbringing and education of all children. It provides the children with an elementary education both theoretical and practical, serves to promote intellectual and moral development, and prepares primary school pupils for the requirements of the secondary schools.

All children who are six years of age by the end of April are required to start primary school that year.

In primary school, the performance of the children in the first and second school grade is ascertained on the basis of an observation questionnaire. This serves as a basis for the discussion of the performance of the child between

teachers and the parents. In the other school grades, the pupils receive reports with marks at the end of each term.

Further details on the assessment of performance are to be found in section 7 of this paper under "Pupil assessment".

To move up automatically to the next grade, sufficient marks are necessary in the promotional subjects, the promotional subjects being mathematics and German language.

Lower secondary school (Oberschule)

The lower secondary school provides general education at different levels of ability. Its main aim is to prepare its pupils for working life.

Pupils are admitted to the lower secondary school after finishing their fifth year at the primary school. The results of the transfer procedure are taken as a basis for the assignment to this type of school. This procedure is carried out towards the end of the fifth class of the primary school, and is based on the teacher's recommendation and tests in German and mathematics. The class teacher of the fifth class classifies the aptitude of his pupils as follows: upper, middle and lower range of the upper secondary school or upper, middle and lower range of the intermediate secondary school or upper, middle and lower range of the lower secondary school.

In principle, according to the legislation for the individual types of schools, the following "political" quotas apply: 12% for the upper secondary school, 53% for the intermediate secondary school and 35% for the lower secondary school. The definitive quotas are calculated by considering the recommended quotas of the teachers to 60% and the "political" quotas to 40%. A computer programme processes the data and prepares a graph for each pupil showing the assignment to the type of school in question. When results are on the border line between two types of school, the Schools Council obtains the opinions of the class teacher and parents, on the basis of which the Community School Council decides the type of school to be attended. An appeal is possible.

The performance of the pupils is basically assessed by marks. At the end of each term, a report is issued and at the end of the fourth class a final report. After the first year at the lower secondary school and subject to certain conditions, it is possible for pupils – without having to pass any tests – to transfer to the first class of the intermediate secondary school.

For the systematic and intensive support of weak pupils in the lower secondary school, pupils are also taught in very small classes and given additional lessons as part of a school trial. These additional lessons are intended as

remedial aid for backward children. They are conceived as a replacement for the special school closed down at the end of the 1989/90 academic year. For every six class teachers of a school, there is one teacher available who has been trained in remedial pedagogics.

Intermediate secondary school (Realschule)

At the intermediate secondary school, the pupils receive a wider and more advanced basic education, preparing them for their future professional career or for further studies. Pupils are admitted to the intermediate secondary school who – according to the transfer procedure – have been assigned to this type of school (or perhaps to the higher secondary school – *Gymnasium*). Streaming is possible in the second, third and fourth grades of the intermediate secondary school.

The pupils are taught by subject teachers. Each class, however, is assigned a special teacher (the class teacher) who looks after them and guides them. He or she is also the person to approach when the class or individual pupils have problems. The performance of the pupils is assessed by marks. At the end of each term, a report is issued and at the end of their school career a final report.

The pupils are automatically promoted to the next grade if their performance is sufficient in the following promotional subjects: German, first foreign language (French), mathematics, history/political science, geography, biology and physics/chemistry. After the third or fourth grade at the intermediate secondary school and subject to certain conditions, it is possible for pupils to transfer to the upper secondary school.

Higher secondary school (Gymnasium)

The higher secondary school prepares pupils for university or similar studies. The Order of the Marist Brothers founded the higher secondary school in 1937. Since 1981, it has been a state school. Two courses are currently offered, both of which lead to a matriculation certificate (*Matura*):

– the type B course featuring literature and history is based on the fifth year of the Primary School and enables pupils to take the *Matura* after eight years;

– the type E course featuring economics follows on from the third form of the intermediate or the higher secondary school and prepares pupils for the *Matura* exam after five years.

The type B *Matura* exam consists of written examinations in German, Latin, French, mathematics and English, and oral examinations in German, Latin, French, mathematics and one optional subject each from the subject groups

a. physics, chemistry, biology and geography; and *b.* history and English. The type E *Matura* exam is the same as the type B exam apart from Latin; instead of Latin, there are written and oral examinations in economics.

At present endeavours are being made to introduce a new basic curriculum and to modify the existing *Matura* regulations. The number of compulsory subjects (twelve at present) is to be reduced to nine and ten respectively. In addition, the general aims of the *Matura* course are to be revised and the individual subjects arranged in four different blocks (languages, social sciences and the humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, art and sport) and at the same time the interdisciplinary element given more emphasis. The division into individual types, which still exists, is to be abandoned and another method of structuring introduced. The course at the higher secondary school ends with the *Matura* exam, which in both Switzerland and Austria is the qualification for university or similar studies with exemption from a university entrance examination.

Special school (special education centre)

The aim of the special school is to help physically or mentally handicapped children who, by reason of their disability, cannot be integrated in the normal school system. Its objective is to enable these pupils to participate as soon as possible as active members in social and professional life and to take their place in society.

The following services are offered at the special school:

- short-term or permanent special educational care for children who are inhibited, handicapped or disturbed in their development;

- special educational support for children already displaying an abnormal development before entering the kindergarten;

- a training workshop for the preparation of young people after their compulsory school attendance for a professional activity.

Depending on the progress made, transfers are possible from the special kindergarten or the special school to the public kindergarten or the public primary school at any time. The Society for the Education of the Handicapped in Liechtenstein is the sponsor of the special school.

Preparatory course for the "Technical College Admission Certificate"

The preparatory course, which is still classed as a school trial, is designed for those young people who would like to continue their education at a technical college after completing their apprenticeship. This preparatory course, which

takes place concomitantly with work activities, lasts three terms and ends with a final examination. Success in the final examination, together with the trade training certificate, constitutes the "Technical College Admission Certificate", which qualifies one for admission to a technical college with exemption from the entrance examination.

Vocational training

Young people in Liechtenstein normally complete their vocational training between the age of 15 and 20. About 75% of school-leavers (after their compulsory school attendance) start an apprenticeship lasting between one and four (mostly three or four) years. The remainder – about 25% – attend various technical colleges, for example commercial school, medical receptionist school or teachers' training college. A "dual system" is applied in vocational training, that is the apprentices work three or four days at their place of employment and attend a technical college for trade or commerce for one or two days a week. About 40% of school-leavers choose a job in the commercial sector.

5. The school as an organisation and as a community

The education act and the corresponding regulations govern the internal administration of the schools. They contain the necessary information on the rights and duties of the pupils and on the disciplinary power of the teachers.

Relatively detailed rules of behaviour can be found in the corresponding decree/school regulations for secondary grade I of 1985. Detailed rules are contained in the school regulations of the individual school premises and in agreements made with individual classes. Corporal punishment, collective punishments and fines are expressly prohibited as disciplinary actions for the non-observance of these and other regulations. Truancy may have various punitive measures as a consequence, ranging from a rebuke, a note in the class register, detention, bad marks for behaviour, a transfer of the pupil or fines to be paid by the parents of up to 500 Swiss francs.

The behaviour of the pupils outside the school is not recorded statistically by the Education Office. It is therefore not possible to make any substantiated statements in this connection. There are many extramural activities available for young people. There are meeting centres for young people in various communities, some of which are generously furnished and directed by a youth welfare officer. They provide facilities for discussions, games, lectures, etc.

Many sports clubs and musical societies, choirs, bowling clubs, chess clubs, indoor swimming pools, a nearby skiing resort, etc., also cater for leisure activities. Sports rank very high with the young people in this country. Outside school hours as such, a music school has emerged in the last decade, which is highly appreciated by both children and young people. The aim of the music school is to teach them a musical instrument.

There are occasional contacts between teachers and pupils outside the school through sports and cultural activities. Very close contacts develop between teachers and pupils during "project weeks", school excursions or class camps. At school, the class can discuss school problems with their class teacher during the weekly class hour. When reports are handed out, for example, the teacher discusses school problems with the individual pupils (they have an "assessment talk").

Many of the older pupils work during their school holidays for a few weeks each year in a business as holiday trainees. On the one hand, they gain an idea of adult working life and, on the other, they earn money. Apprentices are paid wages during their training, these vary by sector and industry.

6. The curriculum

The curriculum of the primary school of the Principality of Liechtenstein contains a wide range of subjects for the pupils of the first to the fifth grades.

Tuition during the first two years, namely in the lower part of the primary school, is concentrated on speech training, the teaching of basic arithmetical ideas and on the arts (musical education, classes in sewing, needlework and handicraft for girls and boys, drawing and physical education).

Other important concerns are the encouragement and strengthening of the child's personal skills and ability to collaborate with others.

In the third to fifth classes, the individual development and performance capacity of the pupils is taken into consideration to a greater extent. On this level, the clarity of thought and self-expression are given forms in preparation for the secondary schools. One hour at school corresponds to forty-five minutes of pure teaching time. The total number of lessons is twenty-one in the first class of the primary school and increases progressively to thirty in the fifth class.

The curriculum of the lower secondary school contains not only German, mathematics, natural science, history/civics/geography, religious instruction, draughtsmanship, business knowledge and economics, domestic science and handicraft/needlework, but also a number of semi-optional and optional

subjects, for example, English, French, education in the fine arts, and supplementary lessons in German and mathematics. Experience shows that pupils of the lower secondary school nowadays hardly ever take French as a semi-optional subject, most prefer English.

The intermediate secondary school (*Realschule*) prepares pupils for admission to schools of higher education and for vocational training; it has to offer a wide range of subjects taught by several specialist teachers. The curriculum of the first form of the intermediate secondary school, corresponds to that at the higher secondary school allowing for, after one year, the possibility of transfer from the one type of school to the other.

Two types of *Matura* courses are offered by the higher secondary school: type B and type E:

Type B is based on the fifth primary school class and lasts eight years. The subjects are German, Latin, French, English and sciences. French is the first foreign language, Latin follows in the second class of the higher secondary school and English in the third class.

Type E is based on the third intermediate secondary school class and lasts five years. A transfer from type B to type E (economics course) is possible. The economic sciences that are taught are: financial book-keeping, science of business management, legal science and applied economics.

Pupils at the secondary schools have at least thirty-four hours of lessons per week, but not more than thirty-eight. The higher the class, the greater the range of optional subjects offered. Before Saturday school was dropped in the summer of 1992, the average number of lessons was one or two lessons a week higher than it is now.

The regular revision of the curricula of the various types of the school is one of the tasks of the Schools Office in collaboration with the teachers concerned. Revision of the curricula concerns not only the content but can also include new topics and subjects.

7. Pupil assessment

In the Principality of Liechtenstein, the performance of pupils is assessed for each subject and in all types of schools by marks ranging from six to one, six being the highest mark (very good) and one the lowest (very weak). Twice a year these marks are entered in a report that is handed to the pupils and the parents for inspection and signature.

In the first and second classes of the primary school, however, the children's performance is not assessed by marks, but by an assessment sheet. The talk with the parents that takes place twice a year is an essential part of this pupil

assessment. In these talks, the parents are informed about the interim level and the progress of their child. The child is also given a short report written in language that the child can understand.

At the end of primary school, which lasts five years, pupils are assigned to the lower secondary school, the intermediate secondary school or the higher secondary school, on the basis of a test in German and mathematics and the teachers' recommendation.

The transfer procedure is based on two components:

- recommendation by the fifth-year teacher;

- results of the transfer test in German and mathematics.

The recommendation and the results of the test are evaluated in a ratio of three to two. A ranking list is then drawn up of all the pupils taking part in the transfer procedure. According to this ranking list and taking into consideration the obligatory quota system (12% higher secondary school, 53% intermediate secondary school and 35% lower secondary school) and the teacher's recommendation, the pupils are then assigned to the different types of schools. Discussions also take place between the teachers, the pupils and the parents.

At present, this transfer procedure and the three-element secondary grade I is the subject of much criticism by the primary school teachers for a variety of reasons. They have long expressed their wish for a transfer procedure without any tests and for an orientation class.

Within the scope of the school project "Pupil Assessment and School Development" on the primary school level, new ways of pupil assessment are currently being tried out in two project schools. At all levels in these schools, marks in the traditional form are no longer given, their place being taken by pupil assessment on the basis of learning objectives. Account is taken of the learning objectives in various subjects and in working and social behaviour. This method of pupil assessment only functions when differentiated forms of teaching are applied and teachers are willing to pay more attention to the development of the individual pupil.

Pupil assessment is above all understood here as a form of controlling the learning process. Great emphasis is also laid on various forms of pupil self-assessment by which the pupil can identify his strong and weak points for himself.

8. School staff: teachers, head teachers, other staff

The head teachers of the secondary schools are appointed by the government. They basically perform management functions in the administration of the schools over which they preside, and have no pedagogic authority over the teaching staff of the school. The school director is essentially a *primus inter pares*.

Like the head teacher, the teaching staff of the secondary schools are as a rule appointed by the government. The conditions of appointment are regulated on the one hand by the teaching service legislation and by the school legislation on the other, whereby the employment conditions are basically of a civil service nature.

Depending on the type of school involved, various teaching qualifications are required for appointment. Teaching staff at the Liechtenstein higher secondary school are required to produce evidence of an academic degree in conjunction with the certificate of appointment for grammar schools. Teachers at the intermediate secondary school need the certificate of appointment for intermediary secondary schools that can be obtained at (teacher training) academies or universities. A special certificate of appointment is also required for lower secondary school positions, this being available from teachers' training colleges. Since Liechtenstein does not have any teacher training facilities of its own, those wishing to become teachers study in Switzerland, for the most part, and to a lesser extent, in Germany and Austria. Educational qualifications from foreign institutions that comply with the legal requirements are recognised. As a rule, these are Swiss (81%), Austrian (16%) or German and other certificates of appointment (3%). At the moment, unemployment among teachers is not a problem but there are already signs that this situation may be a problem before very long. As permanent teachers or teachers with a long-term contract, persons of the following nationalities are currently teaching at schools in Liechtenstein: Liechtenstein: 60%; Swiss: 21%; Austrian: 13%; German: 5%; other nationalities: 1%.

The teachers at state schools receive remuneration for their teaching work according to the current remuneration act. The basic salary is determined by a classification schedule that differentiates between primary, lower secondary, intermediate secondary and higher secondary teachers. The number of lessons taught in the various types of school range from twenty-nine lessons per week (at primary schools) to twenty-two lessons (at the higher secondary school) with an initial annual salary ranging, at the present time, from 57 845 to 84 480 Swiss francs.

Before a position on the teaching staff can be filled permanently, approval has to be granted by the *Landtag*. There are three basic forms of appointment: temporary teachers (appointments of less than one year), semi-permanent teachers (annual appointments for full- or part-time work) and of course permanent teachers (with full-term engagement). Permanent teaching staff are only definitively engaged (Liechtenstein nationals) or receive long-term engagements (foreigners) after they have successfully completed a probationary period of a maximum of four years' duration. During the course of such a probationary period, the teaching staff have to complete various courses and examinations on specific Liechtenstein studies, namely on civics and subjects of national interest and on Liechtenstein school legislation.

The teaching staff at the higher secondary school are usually specialist teachers, that is, they teach only one subject, mathematics, physics, chemistry, French, English, German, etc. Specialist group teaching staff are also appointed to the intermediate secondary school, although they are less specialised. As a rule, there are two teachers in charge of each class; one specialises in natural sciences and mathematics and the other in the languages sector. In the lower secondary schools, one class teacher is assigned to each class and teaches most subjects. Exceptions to this rule are teachers of sports, religion, handicrafts and music who are engaged as specialist staff in all types of school.

Teaching staff are required to perform the usual duties expected of teachers such as: education and instruction according to a schedule and syllabus defined by subject, time and location; supervision of the pupils entrusted to their care. They are obliged to observe discretion with respect to any confidential information communicated to them.

The compulsory number of hours for teaching staff is usually:

- in the upper grades of the higher secondary school: twenty-two weekly lessons;

- in the lower grades of the higher secondary school: twenty-six weekly lessons;

- in the other secondary schools: twenty-eight weekly lessons.

The Schools Council offers its own programme of courses for advanced teacher training, which is drawn up in collaboration with teaching staff. In parallel with this, it is possible for teachers to attend courses in the neighbouring countries. As regards advanced teacher training within the country,

major importance is attached to courses at the individual teacher's school. In addition to the obligatory advanced training for teachers, there is also a voluntary scheme, which is very popular with teachers.

9. The European dimension

Economic, political and social developments in Europe are increasingly being reflected in the various subjects taught at secondary schools. In the subjects of history, political science, economics and economic sciences, considerable attention is paid to European countries. The various European institutions, their function and significance, and their importance for our country, are also examined.

The teaching of foreign languages is becoming increasingly important. French is at present the first modern foreign language and is taught from the sixth class as a compulsory subject in the higher and intermediate secondary school. In the higher secondary school, English is taught as the second modern foreign language from the eighth class and is obligatory for all pupils. In addition, Italian and Spanish are offered as optional subjects. About 4% of the pupils at the higher secondary school choose Italian and about 7% Spanish. At the intermediate secondary school, about 70% of the pupils choose English and some 8% Italian. At the lower secondary school, English is obligatory in the first class and a semi-optional subject in the second, third and fourth classes. Seventy-five per cent of the pupils take advantage of this. The syllabus for the lower secondary school also offers French as an optional subject from the second class onwards and is chosen by 18% of the pupils at this school.

Pupil exchanges are almost exclusively conducted with France and the French-speaking part of Switzerland, but there are also visits by some pupils to English-speaking countries for language study purposes.

In addition to the teaching staff of Liechtenstein nationality, a large number of teachers from Switzerland, Austria and Germany are working in Liechtenstein (see the figures in section 8 above).

It has always been the policy of the government to maintain good relations with the neighbouring countries of the Principality, especially in respect of higher education and the universities. Liechtenstein, being a small country, is only able to provide higher education to a limited extent. This means that most of those passing the *Matura* examination study for their degrees at universities in Switzerland, Austria and Germany.

European integration and the momentous changes in eastern and southern Europe mean that Liechtenstein too, is entering a new phase in the foreign affairs of its educational system. The country is contributing to school devel-

opments in Hungary as part of the aid for eastern Europe. It is supporting a Chair in Budapest for teacher training and provides scholarships for students from eastern European countries.

III. The efficiency and performance of secondary education

Of the many educational questions confronting us at the present, there is one question of pre-eminent importance. To what extent does the three-element educational system currently in place at the first secondary level meet social and educational requirements? Can the trend to a "miscellaneous school", whatever its name might be, be prevented?

Towards the end of the 1980s, the then remedial school, which had existed since 1971 as an independent type of school, was closed down due to both the insufficient numbers of pupils, and the greater reintegration of backward children in the primary and lower secondary schools.

A trend away from the lower secondary school and towards the intermediate and higher secondary schools has now also become evident in recent years. Admission of pupils to the lower secondary school fell by almost 30% between 1975 and 1990. If it were not for the many foreign children coming with their families to Liechtenstein, who were for the most part, put in the lower secondary school, it could be said that the very existence of the lower secondary school was at risk. This situation is even accentuated by the fact that every year between 8% and 15% of these pupils transfer to the first class of the intermediate secondary school. Only a group of backward pupils and children of a foreign tongue remain in the lower secondary school.

With the transfer procedure currently used and through which all children have to pass towards the end of the fifth class of the primary school, the intention is that a performance-oriented assignment in accordance with the prescribed "political" quotas should be achieved (12% for the upper secondary school, 53% for the intermediate secondary school and 35% for the lower secondary school). These assignment quotas are no longer satisfactorily assured by the transfer procedure. For the academic year 1992/93, the following assignments were made: "political" quotas apply: 18,4% for the upper secondary school, 53,1% for the intermediate secondary school and 28,6% for the lower secondary school.

The assignment quotas for the academic year 1993/94 point to an even clearer shift towards the higher types of school: 20,2% for the upper secondary school, 52,7% for the intermediate secondary school and 27,1% for the lower secondary school. Despite the stabilising influence of the prescribed assignment quotas, there is an evident tendency that cannot be ignored towards a "higher type of school" and thus to a better education. The admission of pupils to the first class of the higher secondary school was 6,4% in 1975/76 and has risen progressively from year to year, passing the 20% mark in 1993/94.

This development is likewise apparent from the comparison of the numbers of pupils in the final classes of the different types of schools of the first secondary stage. A valid comparison can be drawn for the period 1980/92 concerning school-leavers of the individual types of schools: the number of pupils in the lower secondary school has declined by 4,1% and in the intermediate secondary school by 12%. Only at the higher secondary school has the number increased by 16,3%. We are of the opinion that this trend should be countered.

From the academic year 1992/93 onwards, a new school career is offered to young people deciding on an apprenticeship. This career involves a trade secondary school or a preparatory course following the apprenticeship to obtain the qualifications for admission to a technical college. This certificate obviates the need to pass an entrance examination for admission to a technical college. On completion of the technical college course, it is possible to transfer to a university, account being taken of the studies already completed.

The integration of the new "Preparatory Course for Technical College Admission Qualification" in the school system harmonises the concept of a continuous expansion in the Liechtenstein education system, with the aim of providing an educational career in parallel with vocational progress after the apprenticeship stage. Through the introduction of this new educational alternative leading via the secondary schools and the subsequent vocational training to the qualification for technical college admission, it is also anticipated that the problems associated with the transfer from the primary school to the secondary schools will become less acute.

IV. Challenges, problems and prospects

In 1970, the Government of the Principality published an education report containing the most important objectives for educational policy in the 1970s. Reflecting the social developments of the time, the implementation of equality of opportunity was one of the principal aims. On the basis of the findings in this education report, a new school act came into force in 1972. Since the current legislation came into effect, the development of the Liechtenstein education system has been dynamic. An important step in the reform envisaged by the School Act of 15 December 1971 was the introduction of new types of schools (remedial school, lower secondary school).

As in the neighbouring countries at that time, and especially in Switzerland, a marked outward differentiation of types of school was achieved at the first secondary level. In order that pupils from the primary school could be assigned to the secondary schools, a transfer procedure was established through which all pupils of the fifth class of the primary school had to pass. The period of compulsory school attendance was increased to nine years, the primary school was reduced from six to five years and the structure of the school authorities was reorganised with the creation of the Schools Council.

Ten years after the introduction of the school act, criticism was expressed by the teaching staff, the parents, and also by the public in general, regarding the transfer age and the transfer procedure. The remedial school was also exposed to increasing pressure since it became more and more difficult to assign pupils to this type of school. As a consequence, thought was given to an inner and outer reform of the school system.

The *Schule wohin?* (Whither the school?) brochure published by the government in 1984 triggered a wide-ranging discussion on questions of the school reform. The results of this discussion were published in 1987 in a report with the title "Whither the school – Second Part – Conceptual Ideas for the Liechtenstein School System". Following this report, a draft for the revision of the school act was prepared which, among other things, provided for the following innovations: introduction of a new school structure, acceptance of different forms of pupil assessment, introduction of special educational measures to facilitate the integration in the school of backward and handicapped child-

ren, establishment of new types of schools, greater collaboration between schools and parents, reorganisation of the structure of the education authorities and the revised definition of outdated pedagogical terms.

The draft law presented by the government for discussion in 1989 did not meet with unequivocal approval for the proposed school structure. This led the government to appoint a commission, in February 1992, with the task of preparing a structural model for the first secondary level that would win general support. This preparatory work has not yet been completed and, like the planned development of a comprehensive foreign language concept, it is anticipated that it will still take quite a long time.

In contrast to the question of the changing of the structure, the various innovations – the objectives listed in the last paragraph but one – which are independent of the structure have already been introduced.

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The aim of this series is to make accessible to the public not only a systematic and coherent exposition of the educational systems and traditions in all signatory states to the European Cultural Convention, but also to outline the essential problems these systems are facing at the present time.
Each book has been written by an expert from the country concerned on the basis of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was drawn up by Denis Kallen who has both co-ordinated the series and undertaken the editing of each text in collaboration with the author.
Given that this is an area in which changes take place particularly quickly and that the translation, revision and publication of the manuscript require a certain amount of time, there will be an opportunity to publish updated information for the Final Conference of the project in 1996.

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